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Statement submitted by Manavata, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Manavata's experience proves that even the most inordinate and seemingly impossible goals of the sustainable development agenda can be turned into prudent actions with a holistic approach and uncompromised efforts. This statement summarizes our position and we will postulate some recommendations.

Manavata, born with the vision of promoting humanity and with the mission of sustainable development at the levels of individual, society and environment, has been executing its development agenda for over 25 years. To give it a structured, scalable and replicable approach, in 2015, Manavata set up 'University for Humanity', in Mahboobnagar district, Telangana State, India, with the following objectives:

- Provide practical knowledge and tools in natural farming.
- Establish sustainable practices and facilitate learning from real models.
- Tap into rural innovation for indigenous solutions for sustainability as well as local job creation.
- Promote holistic health, sustainable life styles, human values and a spirit of service.
- Develop leadership, wider coordination and best practices in the most impactful communities such as farmers, teachers and doctors.

The following results were accomplished within six months:

1. 20 acres of plantation planted in a multi-layer model along with inter-crops like groundnuts, sorghum, beans, corn, vegetables and medicinal plants.
2. 60 acres of arid land turned into cultivatable land with increased soil nutrients.
3. 30 percent rise in profit reported per acre due to increased yield and reduced costs.
4. Over 30,000 patients treated in 25 villages with no access to healthcare.
5. 500+ people trained in Yoga and healthy living.
6. Over 15 leadership workshops organized for farmers, teachers and doctors.
7. Students from over 20 schools, including one for the visually challenged, trained in Yoga, values and healthy living.

Observations and Recommendations:

- a. Natural farming is both feasible and profitable compared to pesticides based farming.
- b. Governments and NGOs should support initiatives to make villages self-sustainable by empowering people through resources, training and leadership. This includes creating employment locally, consuming and marketing local produce and encouraging a drug-free and healthy society.
- c. Establish knowledge centers in various regions to disseminate right practices.

- d. Promote adoption of tree based foods rather than water intensive grain based foods. This leads to growth in trees thus improving ecology as well as human health.
- e. Governments and businesses should encourage organic produce markets so that farmers can make a better living from adopting environmentally friendly practices.
- f. Invest more on making sustainable health practices and education like Yoga, healthy living and alternative medicines accessible to the larger public.
- g. Facilitate greater coordination between NGOs to share resources and ideas for wider reach.

Conclusion:

To move from commitments to results in a short time, it takes diligent planning and thorough execution as demonstrated by Manavata's University For Humanity, thanks to its volunteers' meticulous efforts and leadership's unrelenting dedication. The sustainable methods and results in farming and environment, local employment creation, values based education and healthy living can have wider implications if Governments and others take more direct and credible action. Only then it can be ensured that no one is left behind.